



Town of Bluffton
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To: Town Council

From: Stephen Steese, Town Manager

Date: September 5, 2023

Town Operations / Community Meetings

- Filing for the 2023 Mayor and Town Council elections opened on August 8th and closes at noon on September 8th. The elections will be held on November 14th and the winners will be sworn in at the January 9th Council Meeting.
- We held the final Buck Island – Simmonsville Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee meeting. We have begun pulling together a draft list of priorities based on their input and the previous plan. We have shared this draft with the Steering Committee and will take the edited list to the community for input before we work to finalize the plan.
- Town operations were disrupted by Hurricane Idalia. We closed Town facilities for a couple days in coordination with other county governments and entities. We did a partial opening of the EOC, but we fared well from the storm. It ended up pushing more north and west than the path projection and we received less rain and winds than were predicted. We are in peak hurricane season now and are continuing to monitor and prepare for any potential storm event.

Town Council/Town Attorney Related Meetings

- Weekly Mayor / Mayor Pro Tempore / Town Manager meetings.
- Mayor, Councilman Wood, and staff attended the SOLOCO meeting in Bluffton. The Growth Subcommittee provided an update on their first meetings. They talked about having all local government entities having a shared vision and some options to target future growth. The Regional Housing Trust also provided an update and there were several questions on their priorities and potential funding objectives.
- The Mayor and I attended a countywide mayor/manager meeting hosted by Hilton Head Island. These are planned to be held quarterly.
- The Mayor, Police Chief, and I held our bi-monthly coffee meeting. We discussed the turnout and discussion from the forum the Chief had, ways to encourage Stay Safe Bluffton, and the departments recently completed Strategic Plan.

Updates and Miscellaneous Information

- I met with the Interim County Administrator to discuss several items that the County and Town are working together on. It was a good meeting and helped to ensure our joint endeavors stay prioritized during this transition.
 - We held our Back-to-School event and are continuing our movie series.
 - Staff received the submitted plans for 1095 May River Road from our Affordable Housing partner. The DRC committee will review the plans the second week of September. We are looking at steps to transition to the property on Bluffton Road once permits are issued on this property.
 - Held some meetings related to economic development within Bluffton and with some of the industries we are looking to target with our proposed Economic Development Incentive Ordinance.
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